(ख) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में विंग-वार (नौसेना, थलसेना और वायुसेना) तथा कमान-वार ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) इस कमी के कारण क्या हैं तथा इस कदम का भारतीय सशस्त्र सेनाओं की क्षमता और मनोबल पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ने की संभावना है?

रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जॉर्ज फर्नान्डीज): (क) और (ख) सरकार ने शासस्त्र सेनाओं में सैनिकों की संख्या में कटौती के संबंध में कोई निर्णय नहीं लिया है। तथापि सेना ने 31.3.1999 तक 50,000 सैनिकों की कम तैनाती किए जाने के लिए एक योजना तैयार की है। यह योजना केवल सेवा के सभी सेनांगों और सेवाओं पर चरणबद्ध तरीके से लागू की जा रही है।

(ग) इस योजना का अभिप्राय धन की बचत करना है जिसे सेना के आधुनिकीकरण कार्यक्रम तथा सैनिकों के जीवन स्तर में सुधार के लिए उपयोग किया जाएगा।

सैनिकों की कम तैनाती संबंधी योजना बनाते समय सेना की समाघात तैयारी सहित सभी बातों पर विचार कर लिया गया है।

Cutting down of trees at Tilpat Firing Range

2296. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air Force has cut down 4.9 lakh trees and shrubs at Tilpat Firing Range near Hindon Air force Station, Ghaziabad in preparation for a fire-power demonstration without seeking the mandatory sanction from either the Ministry of Environment or the Ministry of Defence; and

(b) if so, the reaons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The Air Force authorities have informed that in 1997 while reactivating the Tiplat Range mostly wild Kikar buses and small size trees were removed as the thick vegetation was obstructing the view of the target area and was also considered a flight safety hazard. However, an inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the full facts.

Sale of CSD items to non-entitled persons

2297. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the top-officials of Canteen Stores Department are authorised to sell CSD items to persons not entiled to CSD facilities;

(b) whether it has been brought to the notice of Government that a number of items, mostly liquor, have been sold to persons not entitled to CSD facilities at CSD canteen, A F Station, New Delhi under the authority of Manager/Deputy Manager/other Air Force officials for the last several years; and

(c) what action has been taken against the persons who had misused their authority?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SRHI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. No one is authorised to sell CSD items to non-entitled category of persons.

(b) No specific complaint has been recevied by the government.

(c) Does not arise in view of reply to (b) above.

SCs/STs/OBCs in Defence Services

2298. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been done to find out the prcentage of SC,ST, and OBC persons serving in Defenc forces, both as Officers and in other ranks;

(b) if not, whether Govenrment would underetake a survey to find out these figures; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to implement reservation policy in the Defence services?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) No, Sir.